

We claim as our invention:

1. A method of managing information concerning implementation of best management practices in agricultural production, the method comprising the steps of:

- a. gathering management data in connection with inputs and services for the production of food, feed, or fiber;
- b. transmitting the gathered information to at least one database, each database including information on the performance of those inputs and services under a variety of circumstances, places, and conditions;
- c. analyzing and storing the gathered information;
- d. transmitting the analysis and a quotation for inputs and/or services including a service loss guaranty or insurance policy on the performance of those inputs and/or services;
- e. preparing and executing a commercial service agreement for the inputs and/or services;
- f. providing information related to the inputs and services;
- g. monitoring status, progress, yield, and other performance measures related to the inputs and/or services;
- h. providing a remedy in the event of performance failure; and
- i. updating the database with the performance data obtained.

2. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the inputs include a control chemical selected from a group comprising insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, and nematicides.

3. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the inputs comprise soil amendments.

4. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the inputs comprise nutrients selected from a group comprising animal or green manure, commercial fertilizer, and feed supplements.

5. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the inputs comprise one of seeds, plant species, and livestock species.

6. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the inputs are selected from a group comprising control chemicals, soil amendments, nutrients, seeds, plant species, and livestock species.

7. The method defined in claim 1 wherein no inputs are specified or quoted, but where a quotation is provided solely for a performance guaranty or insurance policy.

8. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise application of inputs.

9. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise at least one of sampling, testing or monitoring of weather conditions, production conditions, pest populations, soil types, nutrient levels, and prescribed burning of vegetation.

10. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise recommending at least one of input types, amounts, application timing, and application method.

11. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise at least one of recommending and implementing tillage practices.

12. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise at least one of recommending timing and method of, and performing, controlled burning of vegetation.

13. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise at least one of recommending timing and method of, and performing, destocking of livestock.

14. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the services comprise a combination of at least one of application, sampling, testing, monitoring, and recommendation of inputs.

15. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the commercial service agreement includes one of a sales commission and a fee for service to a third-party vendor who will deliver and/or apply the quoted products and services.

16. The method defined in claim 1 wherein federal crop insurance coverage or other insurance on the production that may cover all or a portion of a service loss is gathered and considered and referenced in one of the quote, the commercial service agreement, and information provided.

17. The method defined in claim 1 wherein input and service cost savings, cost-shares, rebates, tax credits, and subsidies available to one of the producer and the input or service provider are included or referenced in a quotation, and information or application forms for obtaining same are included in the output, entered into the database, or automatically submitted for redemption on behalf of the producer or the input or service provider.

18. The method defined in claim 1 wherein emissions trading credits available to the producer or input or services provider are included or referenced in a quotation, and information or application forms for obtaining those trading credits are included in the output, entered into the database, or automatically executed on behalf of the producer or the input or service provider.

19. The method defined in claim 1 wherein permit or regulatory compliance requirements applicable to the producer or to the input or services provider are included or referenced, and information or application forms for obtaining those permits or meeting those

compliance requirements are included in the output, entered into the database, or automatically executed on behalf of the producer or the input or service provider.

20. The method defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the databases includes recommended input application and service practices, or links to a decision support system that outputs recommended input application and service practices back to the database for transmission to the producer or the input or service provider.

21. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the information provided comprises one or more of information on crop insurance or other coverage; cost savings, cost sharing, rebate, subsidy, trade opportunities, permit or other regulatory requirements, application forms, executed applications, executed trades; and optimized input and service recommendations.

22. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the service loss guaranty or insurance policy comprises a remedy for losses resulting from failure of the recommended inputs or services.

23. The method defined in claim 1 wherein at least one database includes a current cost for reinsurance coverage on the service loss guarantee or insurance policy and the method considers that cost when determining a quotation for inputs and services.

24. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the information system communicates electronically with insurance or reinsurance sources, obtains a current price for insurance or reinsurance, and considers the current reinsurance price in determining a quotation for the service loss guaranty.

25. The method defined in claim 1 wherein information about the status, progress, yield and/or quality of the plant or livestock production are entered into the information

management system to predict expected losses, determine service guaranty or insurance policy payments to the producer, manager or input/service provider, or report to regulatory agencies, providers of cost shares or subsidies, emissions credit trading facilities or others.

26. The method defined in claim 1 wherein information about the status, progress, yield and/or quality of the plant or livestock production is gathered remotely via satellite, aerial, infrared, digital or other photography or imaging.

27. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the gathered information is transmitted to and received by a computer network, handheld computer, portable computer and/or wireless device.

28. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the gathered information includes location information generated using a global positioning system (GPS)-based device.

29. The method defined in claim 1 wherein a third party comprising one of a regulator, cost share or subsidy provider, or emissions credit trading facility is given direct access to data from the database for a fee or other consideration.

30. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the user of the information system is one of a producer and a manager of food, feed, fiber, or livestock production.

31. The method defined in claim 1 wherein the user of the information system is one of an input provider and a service provider to producers and managers of production.